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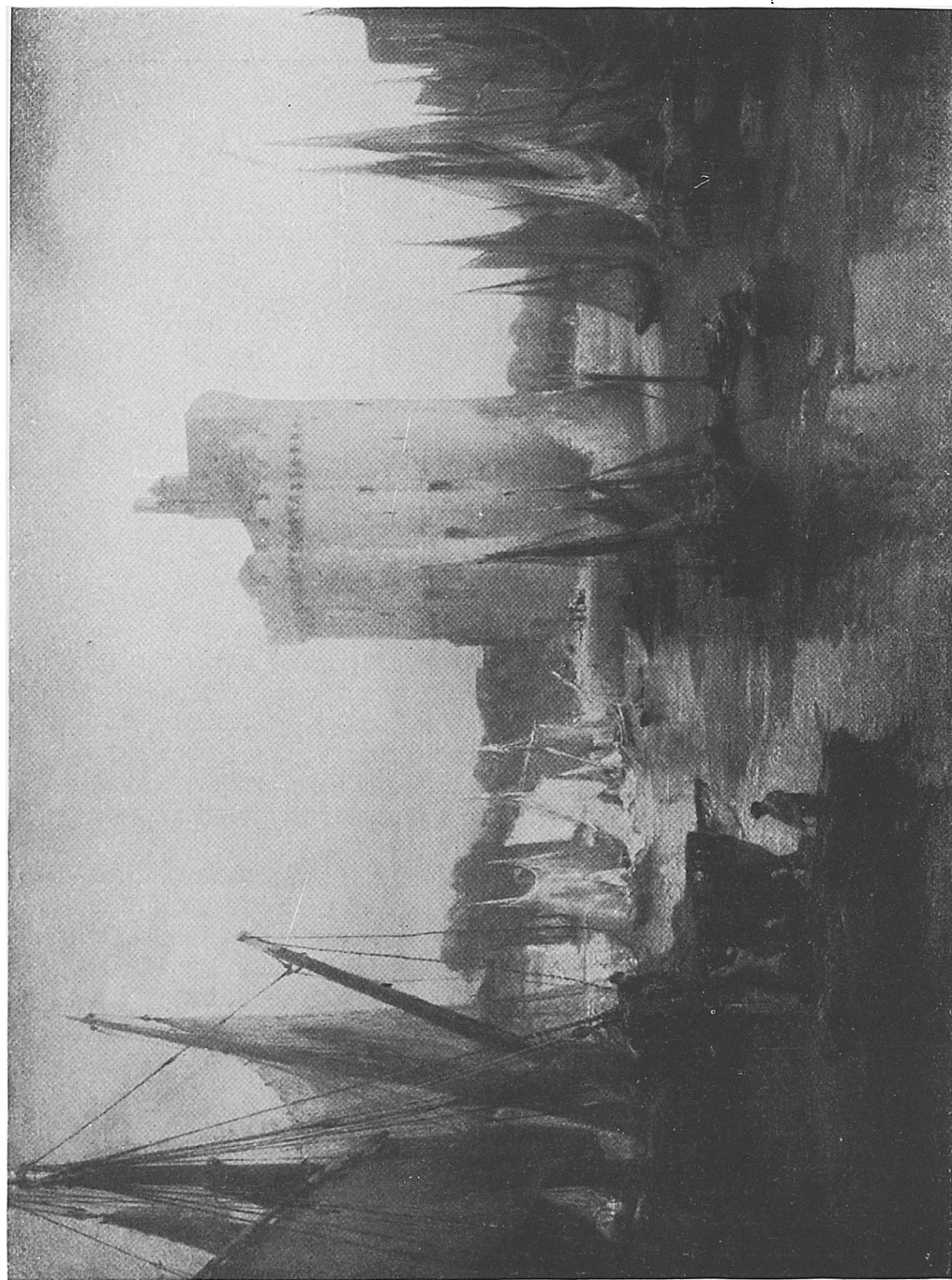
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PORT OF LA ROCHELLE, FRANCE

By Colin Campbell Cooper

Editor's Table

A FAMOUS GALLERY

FEW things are of more importance to artists and art lovers than a proper appreciation of the works of the Old Masters. To overestimate them is as fatal as to undervalue, but they are so undoubted a factor in the life of Art that an intimate acquaintance with them may be said to be the foundation of the love of art, if not of art itself.

In a series of volumes recently issued by L. C. Page & Co. of Boston called "The Art Galleries of Europe" series, we have a set of books of great value to Art Library. They comprise volumes on "The Art of the Louvre," "The Vatican," the "Pitti Palace," the "Venice Academy," the "National Gallery," the "Dresden Gallery," and last of the series, "The Art of the Prado," by Charles S. Ricketts.

Mr. Ricketts' style is pleasant, if at times obscure. He is, in the main, in sympathy with the best in this "Gallery of Masterpieces," as some one has called the Prado Gallery—a gallery which is "National in character, and which represents even more the noble and direct patronage of the arts," so largely a Spanish characteristic.

It is not only Murillo and Ribera, Velasquez and Goya that we study in the Prado; Spain was broader in application than merely to enshrine the works of her own artists, and the Prado is the finest collection extant, showing the VII Century for collection.

Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, even Watteau all are represented and their masterpieces gleam from the walls in a profusion of varied beauties, almost dazzling to the eye. It is truly a gallery for artists and a veritable Mecca for art lovers.

It is a pity, perhaps, that the description of these masterpieces has not fallen into more sympathetic hands, for in the matter of Spanish painters Mr. Ricketts writes with an acrimony as marked as is his admiration for the painters of other schools. There is no writing *con amore* in his criticisms of anything Spanish, and this seems to arise from a total lack of comprehension of the Spanish character.

He does not even grasp the significance of the splendid melancholy of the portraiture, but talks acidly about "the somber gravity of things Spanish, not so far removed from the stately and simple indifference, behind which the Arab hides a total absence of thought."

He does not even seem to appreciate the fervent piety of the Spanish nature shown in the religious paintings of such artists as Ribera, Pacheco or Murillo.

Many people do not care for Murillo, but no critic before has ever made the sweeping denunciation of him, that one finds in Mr. Ricketts' work. Those of us who have seen and studied the marvellous "Conceptions," the

charming "*niños*," the gracefully girlish "Virgins," the matronly and wise "St. Annes" of this painter, feel a quick astonishment almost bordering upon indignation when reading such diatribes as "Murillo's pictures show a certain facility, he is ample and easy, vague and vulgar. There is not in his pictures a beautiful nor a sinewy line, not a space of fascinating color, though one cannot deny a clever and effective massing of lights and shadows."

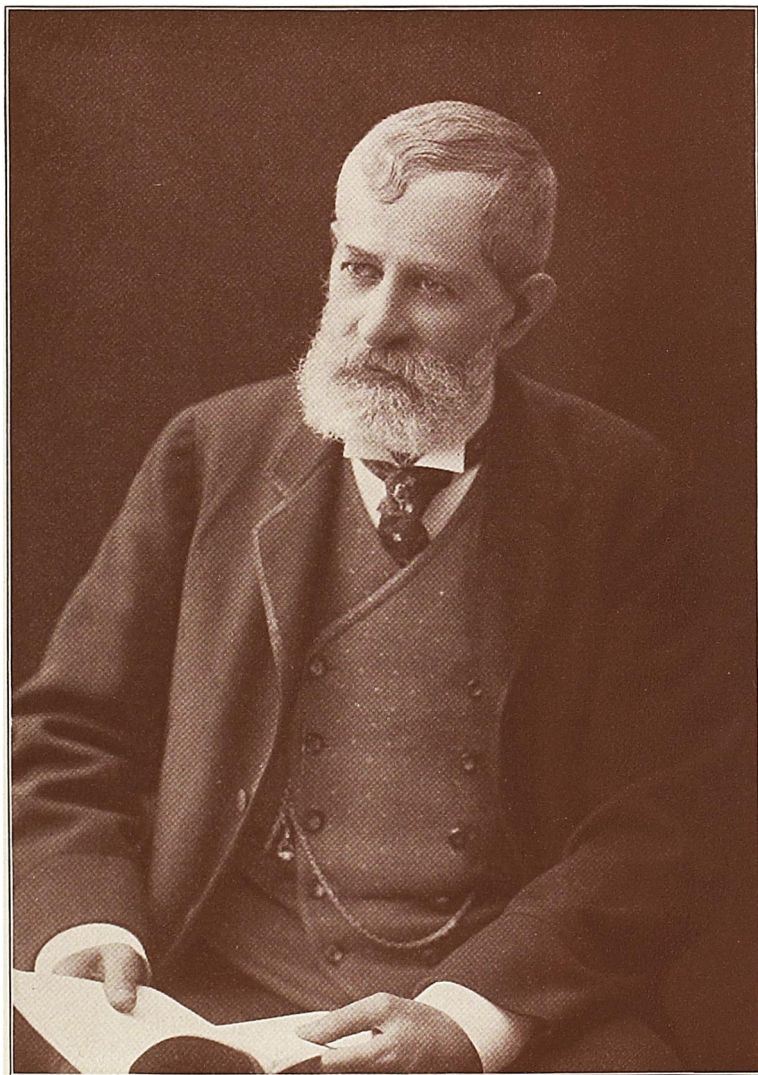
Murillo is purely Spanish and his work will be loved only by those who comprehend the Spanish character. Velasquez appeals more largely to the world in general and Mr. Ricketts gives him the palm as the painter of children. As the painter of child portrait he undoubtedly reigns supreme, especially when the child is of the aristocracy, for he portrays in a marvellous manner the gravity of the little highborn Spanish men and maids, with their flower-like faces and their wonderful soft hair and eyes. Murillo's *niños* and gamins are equally as typical of Spanish life, though it is low life, rather than that shown in the aristocratic creations of Velasquez.

To the foreign works upon the walls of the Prado the author is fair. He praises the Titians, the Van Dycks and the Rubens, and gives due meed of praise to the works of the Italian school. His book contains a summary of the "Art of the Prado," which is interesting and clever as to technical criticisms, and as a work of book-making the volume is perfect. The illustrations, excellent half tones, are from the best of the pictures noted and the cover design shows the royal arms of Castile and Leon between the Pillars of Hercules, and surrounded with the conventionalized pomegranates of Andalucia.

A WYANT FOUND

One of the most interesting "finds" on record in recent years was made last summer by Mr. George S. Hellman, of the New York Co-Operative Society. Late last June, when the auction season was drawing to a close, Mr. Hellman stopped in at an auction house to look over a miscellaneous mass of prints and drawings that were to be put up for sale that evening. In going through one lot of very mediocre old watercolors and amateurish drawings, his attention was suddenly arrested by an oil painting, a little more than nine by twelve inches, which, spite of the thick layer of many years' dirt that covered it, he immediately took for a Wyant.

Calling for a rag and some water, Mr. Hellman managed to remove some of the dust and discovered Wyant's signature, and the date, 1865. Even this partial cleaning served



HARRINGTON FITZGERALD
President American Art Society of Philadelphia

to reveal the exquisite character of the little painting. Mr. Hellman, not wishing to show too much interest, did not attend the sale in person, but instructed one of his clerks to buy in the lot of 48 pictures of which the Wyant was one. The price fetched was \$5.25, or a little less than 11 cents for each picture.

The next day Mr. Hellman took the painting to Beers Brothers, to have the dirt of more than two-score years removed from its surface. Mr. Beers at once pronounced it one of Wyant's dreams, one of those few wonderfully painted pictures whereupon the master lavished a wealth of his very best brushwork.

One expert pronounced the value of the painting to be not less than a thousand dollars, while a collector of American paintings, who owns several Wyants, stated that this one was the finest he had ever seen.

The picture shows a hay wagon returning home at sunset. Two cows and a farmer follow the wagon. The sun is setting directly behind the hay wagon, and the manner in which the light of its beams surround the sides of the hay, as well as the wonderful brown treatment of the entire foreground, is reminiscent of Rembrandt. The painting of the sky is masterly. Everything is glowing,

but in a subdued tone, and the handling of the blues, grays, lavenders and pinks is delicate in the extreme.

With all this delicacy there is a bigness to the picture that only a great painter could give to so small a canvas. It is indeed one of "Wyant's dreams," and Mr. Hellman takes great pride in the Wyant he bought for 11 cents.

SOME NEW BOOKS

The "Commonplaces of Vocal Art," by Louis Arthur Russell, is the very attractive effort of a thoroughly competent teacher to explain to young singers and to the layman as well those underlying principles of the vocal art which, if better understood, would result in much more productive study than is usual.

"Half Hour Lessons in Music," by Mrs. Hermann Kotzchmar, is the title of a thoroughly readable little book in which this advanced teacher seeks to elucidate her ideas of primary piano instruction. It should prove invaluable to all teachers of children especially.

The "Appreciation of Music," by Thomas Whitney Surette and Daniel Gregory Mason, is one of the most helpful books printed in a long time. It deals with Form especially in a way that is perfectly clear, and in its entirety seeks to elucidate to the average concert-goer the things he should listen for in a concert in order to have a clear comprehension of the work before him. The book is readable for anyone who is at all interested in the musical art, and can be used most advantageously as a text-book also.

The "Four Winds" is an elaborate scene built upon the Song of Hiawatha, and set to music for soprano and tenor soli, with chorus. The work has been done by Carl Busch, of Kansas City, a musician of rare attainments and unflinching taste. This is the composition that was awarded the \$500 prize offered by Strawbridge and Clothier for an American cantata and was chosen by the judges, Victor Herbert, W. W. Gilchrist and Herbert J. Tily, as the best of the many offered.

* * *

Mayor Reyburn has appointed the members of the new Municipal Art Jury for the city of Philadelphia. There can be only one artist on the board, and Mr. Harrington Fitzgerald was selected for that high honor. In commenting on this jury, which will pass on all matters of art concerning Philadelphia, the "Ledger" says: "Harrington Fitzgerald, painter of many canvases, and president of the American Art Society, is to be showered with honors by Mayor Reyburn. This recognition of the artistic endeavors of the painter of thirty works in oil will be shown by the chief magistrate in his appointment as a member of the Municipal Art Jury. He will thus take his place with members of the Academy of the Fine Arts who may be asked to serve.



"THE GOWN AND THE BOOK"

In looking over the review of the exhibition by the Society of Western Artists, which appears in this issue, we notice that one very harmonious canvas received but slight mention and no comment. We refer to "The Gown and the Book," by Mr. Walter Marshall Clute, secretary of the society. In many ways it is one of the most important and satisfactory pictures in the exhibition. It is charming in both conception and treatment. It is one of those *genri* pictures of which Mr. Clute is so fond and paints so admirably—always giving an impression of direct and truthful observation, together with a marked individuality of expression.

It is not to be considered a portrait (though well it might be), for it is very evident to the observer, as is suggested in the title, that the center of interest lies in the treatment of detail in the flowered gown and the old book. The vases, candlestick and other accessories are very well handled and the catch-lights in the glass doors of the bookcase are effects that cannot escape the observer. It is worth your while to look long and study this picture.

* * *

"The Land of Dollars," now being presented at the Grand by Ezra Kendall, is not a play. It is an interesting curiosity. Every one who has been connected with it is willing to admit that something has happened to it. But no one is able to tell what, or explain how, or when, or why it happened.